

82 Halt on the Mode of Conducting Christian Missions, and of
what the present Crisis requires.

1. It is high time to act: yet not too hastily to act wisely.

2. Objections to the A.B.C.F.M. It is constructed on wrong principles — is in bad hands. — No prospect of amendment. — Close Corporation — Ultra Episcopal — Purveyor in the East — Pro Slavery at home — Oppression at the Sandwich Islands. — In fellowship with the workers of iniquity.

3. Difficulties in the way of right action. — Few local Churches & fewer Eccl. bodies ready for right action. — Individuals hampered by their eccl. Connections — divided into diff't. sects — few — scattered — without concert — without plan — misled by precedent.

4. Encouragements. God is at work, producing great changes. Many are inquiring. More are dissatisfied. The progress of the age is onward. — "Conservatism" is infatuated.

5. What we must have. Christian Missions so managed as to please God & unite the friends of thorough reform. — Adapted to the coming age: Progressive, yet Stable. Broad, as the divine law — narrow, as the way to life. Distinctively Evangelical, and as decidedly moral. Uniting piety with humanity. — propagating Christ's Christianity, by Christian methods.

6. Standards — Landmarks. The N. Testament as the Expositor & Sequel of the O.T. — the teachings & Example of Christ & his Apostles. — The living Spirit of Christianity. — The fundamental first principles of equity & truth. — Inalienable rights. — "The holy equality of souls before God. — The Unity of a Common brotherhood in Christ."

7. What we must, at all hazards, avoid. — The least departure from these Standards & Landmarks. — The least compromise of fundamental first principles, to gain numbers, names, respectability, respect, favor, or funds. — Particularly

The least infringement upon the rights of local Church independency, or "ministerial parity" at home or abroad: — Episcopal prerogatives & acts. Incipient hierarchies — monopolies of missionary fields or labor.

Consequently, Central Committees, Boards, Secretaries etc. who shall exercise the exclusive prerogative of selecting or stationing missionaries, or who shall attempt to dictate or control them. — The time has fully come when all this must be done away, or we must continue silent under the Episcopal assertions that missions can only be episcopally sustained — that the Am Home Mission Soc. & A.B.C.F.M. are the most formidable Episcopacies in America. — The Alternatives cannot longer be postponed, viz (1) Abandon Missions, or (2) Find

out how to Conduct them on other than Episcopal principles — or
(3) go over to Episcopacy & be ferried back to ROME — via Lambeth, or by
any other route that may be preferred — making all due haste, as in duty bound.
Many persons, all over the Country, are fully convinced of this, & will Co-operate
no more with any Scheme of missions by which a virtual Episcopacy is retained.

Such are some of the outlines — But by what modes of organization shall these prin-
ciples be carried into operation? — How shall it be done? — Answer,

(1) If the friends of a free & pure Christianity were not so scattered in location,
divided by seeds, & mixed up in Church Connections with opposers, the work of
restoring primitive Christian Missions would be obvious & simple. Each local
Church, on the primitive model, with the missionary spirit, & acting on the plan of Prof
Schmucker, might send its learned preacher into the missionary field, & do without one
at home, unless it could sustain both. Or 2 or 3 or more such Churches, uniting
in a man of their choice, might sustain him in the field they should select.
We should, then, need no great missionary boards. Nothing short of this result should
content us. Our plans should look in that direction, at least not prevent or
delay it. (2) The first Christians, under circumstances not very dissimilar, organized
no Societies or Miss. Boards, but "went every where, preaching the Word." & no other
missions have been so simple, so efficient, or so pure. — (3) Yet I would not superstitiously
insist upon an exact adherence to their mode, in this particular, pro-
vided the obvious & fundamental principles of a free, social, Christian activity
can be accommodated to other forms, leaving Church — ministerial — and indi-
vidual freedom unimpaired. With these principles, as land marks, in our eye,
is it not possible to draft a Constitution & Programme of a General Missionary
Society & its operations that shall meet the wants of the times? The task is
a delicate one. Yet I think we need not despair, if we can add patience
to courage, & comprehensiveness to precision. Let us try.

Plan of Constitution &c.

1. This Society shall be called the Am. Evangelical Missionary Society.
2. Its object shall be to propagate a free & pure Christianity throughout the world.
3. Its members shall be professing Christians who assent to this Constitution & Co-
operate in promoting its objects, & hold themselves bound by its principles & pledge.
4. "We believe &c." Here insert a brief simple, yet explicit, evangelical Creed,
including "the holy equality of souls before God" — the sinfulness of slave holding &c.
We promise to devote our means & efforts to the propagation of Christianity
as thus defined. We will sustain no slave holding missionaries — nor Co-

operate with Slave holders or ask their aid in the work of Christian Missions. — nor will we aid the Missions of Associations that do.

5. Our "field is the world" — "all nations," including our own, but especially the poor — the oppressed, the neglected, the despised. — The Missions we send forth must, every where, reject the principle that the State or Civil Power may dictate the Religion of its Subjects. They must proclaim the Gospel of deliverance to the Captives, the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound — they must reprove the sins of licentiousness & oppression in all their forms, ^{insist upon} ~~advocate~~ abstinence from all intoxicating drinks — and labor for the promotion of universal peace. They must hold no affinity nor truce with the oppressions, usurpations, impostures, & superstitions of false and degenerate Religions in any portion of the earth.

6. The Officers of this Soc. shall be a Pres^t — Vice Pres^t Sec. Treas^r. & Ex. Com. to be chosen Annually, by the members. The Ex. Com. shall collect & diffuse information respecting Missions, & the wants of Missionaries — & facilitate the intercourse between Missionaries & those who sustain them. The Treasurer shall receive such funds as may be contributed to the Soc. & disburse ^{them} as directed by the Ex. Com. He shall also receive Remitt^s as directed by the donors such sums as they may designate for particular Missions or Missionaries. Any sums contributed for the General Object, & directed to be disbursed at the discretion of the Ex. Com. they shall distribute among the Missionaries, from time to time, according to their wants, & for their guidance in this duty they may form estimates of what each missionary needs, & obtain, both from the Treasurer & the Missionaries, accounts of what they receive.

7. Missionaries may be selected & stationed, with their own concurrence, by such Churches, local missionary Societies, or individuals, as may agree to sustain them, for an indefinite or specified period, or during mutual consent. But all Missionaries receiving Remittances thro' this Society must be members of it, in good fidelity, or at least, must act upon its principles & its pledge.

The Ex. Com. may suggest, from time to time, through proper Channels, to the Christian public, such fields of labor as they think should be occupied. They may recommend for support, as Missionaries, any persons they approve, and who have the qualifications before stated, and they may invite the contribution of funds for their support. — They may advise,

but not dictate or Control, the missionaries, and the Mission Churches, in respect to their Course. — Both the Ex. Com. & the Missionaries may freely Communicate their wishes & views to the Christian public — and the publications of the Soc. (if it have any) shall be equally open to both. Each Missionary shall furnish, either to the Ex. Com. or more directly to the donors who sustain them, a quarterly account of their receipts and expenditures. — Missionaries are to do all they can for self support, & to teach converts the Christian duty of doing what they can to sustain Christian Institutions themselves, & dispense with aid as soon as practicable, & aid the Cause of missions in their turn. — Mission Churches & Missionaries to be ecclesiastically independent of the Ex. Com. and the donors.

8. Publications of the Soc. (if it has any) to be self sustained or by contributions for that express purpose. — Salaries of Secretaries or others, with Office & incidental expenses to be defrayed by another distinct fund raised for that purpose. The Ex. Com. at discretion, to use such other papers & periodicals, as may be open to them, as mediums of Communication.

[9. Memo — Miscellaneous. — No life memberships but by "Continuance in well doing" No preference to wealthy Contributors over the poor who "cast in their mites". — No "auxiliary Societies" nor "delegates". — the Soc. being composed solely of individuals acting, each for himself.] — 10. A clause providing for Amendments.

Explanations, remarks &c on the foregoing. By having a Soc. based

Solely on individual members, we can go at work, at once, without being hindered by adverse Church votes or Ch. wrangles, — Without halting for "Conservative" Churches to come up or more "radical" Churches to be gathered & organized out of them. — We are relieved, too, of all perplexity about "denominations" & adjusting their rival claims, or quading against jealousies. — For we mention none — know none. Contend with none, & go on whether they continue to exist, or disband. In most localities, reformers, of 3 or 4 sects, must unite, either in recommending or sustaining a man, irrespective of his Sect. The Constitution, thus agrees with the fact. Yet it leaves room for "denominations" to select or sustain their own men, if they choose — Articles 6 & 7 are designed to lay out work for an Ex. Com. without giving them a monopoly, inconsistent with Church — ministerial & individual independence & rights. Also, to lay out a field for concurrent harmonious missionary enterprise, all over the Country. — Whether my first hasty sketch has secured all this in the best manner, I cannot say. — But it can be done. Or else it follows that Christian freedom, & individuality & responsibility & action cannot be made to harmonize with such General Societies & their Ex. Committees. — So that we must give them all up & full back upon the literal precedents & individuality of effort recorded in the book of the Acts &c. Here, then, is the problem for bro. Phelps & bro. Lamon, to dispose of, at their leisure. This matter adjusted, and all is "plain sailing" before us.

Some, I know, will criticize my sketch, because it does not distinctly enjoin Ch. Independence & Christian Union on the Missionaries & their Churches. — the absence of Presbyterianism & of Sectarian bars. — My answer will be that neither Independence nor Union can be forced. The Missionaries & their Churches must act for themselves, & be Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, or Unionists, as they please. — And each member of the National Society is left free to assist which of these Churches & Missionaries he pleases, & that too, without sustaining any other, unless he chooses.

The plan will be found to embody a moral, religious, & spiritual enterprise — not a mere money operation.